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DAS Rosemary DiCarlo (center, right) speaks with Kosovo PM, Hashim Thaçi (center, left) on January 26th, 2008. Photo: Burim Pllana, USOP.

DAS ROSEMARY DICARLO PRAISES OUTREACH TO MINORITY COMMUNITIES

In press conferences following her meetings with Kosovo President, Fatmir Sejdiu and Prime Minister, Hashim Thaçi, DAS DiCarlo praised the leaders' outreach to non-Albanian communities, their efforts to include Kosovo Serb (K-Serb) representatives in the new government, and their continued commitment to implementing the Ahtisaari plan for Kosovo's final status. After meeting K-Serb representatives, DAS DiCarlo called on leaders and the general public to support them in their work. Stressing the importance of a multi-ethnic society for Kosovo's development and European future, she reiterated the U.S.' commitment to resolving final status as soon as possible. All Kosovo-wide print and broadcast media highlighted DAS DiCarlo's message as the lead story.



DAS Rosemary DiCarlo (left) with Valdete Idrizi of Community Building Mitrovica meet on January 25th, 2008. Photo: Lumi Shala, USOP.

DAS DICARLO PRAISES MULTIETHNIC NGO

DAS Rosemary DiCarlo met with Valdete Idrizi, founder of the multi-ethnic NGO "Community Building Mitrovica" (CMB), and discussed the myriad conflict resolution activities of the NGO. Ms. Idrizi, a Kosovo Albanian, was born and raised in North Mitrovica, a Serb majority town. During the 199 conflict, she lost her home and was forced to flee to the south of the city, where she decided to look to the future and to a peaceful resolution of the divided ethnicities. She founded CBM at that time, which utilizes peace-building programs to reach out to all peoples. Starting with programs that assisted war widows from both sides (Serbs and Albanians), her NGO has initiated more than 200 programs over the past 8 years. Often threatened, Ms. Idrizi refuses to be intimidated and, with others, defended Serb Orthodox churches and families during the March 2004 riots. She continues to be an inspiration to Kosovo.



A teacher tells ELF Kirsten Mashinter (center) about the benefits of pair work in the English classroom. Photo: Laura Hochla, USOP.

ELF TEACHES TEACHERS NEW TOOLS

Approximately 20 elementary and secondary school English teachers from Prizren, Kosovo attended a 5-seminar series taught by English Language Fellow, Kirsten Mashinter. The seminars focused on skills teachers could use to strengthen the structure of their classrooms. Seminar participants discussed topics such as what makes for good teaching and how they could improve the behavior of disruptive students. Teachers also learned about lesson planning, classroom management, working with large classes, and giving clearer classroom instructions. There is a great need for continuing teacher education in Prizren, and this module is one of the few chances English teachers have for in-service training.



Kosovo Albanian and Serb youth in their new Patagonia gear at Prevala ski area, Kosovo. Photo: ELF Kirsten Mashinter, 01/12/08.

SNOW & SUN BRING ALBANIAN & SERB YOUTH TOGETHER ON SKIS

On January 12, 2008, English Language Fellow Kirsten Mashinter took her multi-ethnic ACCESS English class to a ski hill in Prevala, Kosovo. For most of the students, this was their first time on skis. Students took ski lessons from local instructors and practiced snowplowing. The group took a walk in the mountains, rented a few snowbikes and played on the ski hill until dusk. Kirsten also secured a donation from Patagonia of over \$3000 worth of outdoor clothing. Along with a lesson on layering and dressing for outdoor winter activities, this generous gift allowed her students to enjoy a full day outside without getting wet or cold.

The ACCESS program is USOP's most grass-roots program for promoting inter-ethnic cooperation in Kosovo. Through their classes and extracurricular trips like this one, students forge friendships that bridge the ethnic and linguistic divide.